

Survivor Series Count-Up – 1988 (2017 Redo): Hulk Hogan, You're A Bad Man

Survivor Series 1988

Date: November 24, 1988

Location: Richfield Coliseum, Richfield, Ohio

Attendance: 13,500

Commentators: Gorilla Monsoon, Jesse Ventura

It's one of my favorite times of the wrestling year as we're up to Survivor Series. As usual I'm redoing an old show to go with last year's, and this time around it's from my favorite era. The vote went to the 1988 edition and that means the Mega Powers are running wild. Other than that, there's a heck of a tag team showcase. Let's get to it.

In a sign of the times, there's no opening sequence and we go straight to the announcers welcoming us to the show.

Team Ultimate Warrior vs. Team Honky Tonk Man

Ultimate Warrior, Brutus Beefcake, Jim Brunzell, Sam Houston, Blue Blazer

Honky Tonk Man, Bad News Brown, Danny Davis, Ron Bass, Greg Valentine

Warrior took the Intercontinental Title from Honky Tonk Man about two months ago. Everyone else is just kind of thrown in, including Brunzell, who is replacing Don Muraco after Don left the company. Even the announcers think it's a bad idea to have Brown on a team. Beefcake hammers on Valentine (See what I did there?) to start but Davis, the EVIL referee, knees Beefcake from the apron.

Not that it matters as Brutus slaps on the sleeper and Davis is done in less than a minute and a half. Honestly, what else were you supposed to do with him? Valentine comes back in and Jesse gets on Beefcake for not tagging out (which was actually a problem for him last year too). Blazer (Owen Hart as a superhero) comes in off the top to start on Valentine's

arm until Brunzell gets the tag to do the same.

The great looking dropkick plants Greg but Brown makes a blind tag and beats the tar out of Brunzell. Bad News finally gets tired of it and scores the elimination off a Ghetto Blaster (enziguri, a pretty awesome looking move at the time). The rather skinny dancing cowboy (it was a different time) Sam Houston comes in and gets hammered in the chest (Jesse: "Welcome to the big time kid."), followed by a clothesline (which also hammers him in the chest).

Valentine comes in and hits Brown by mistake so Bad News walks out, as you kind of knew he would. That's a great way to protect him, especially when he'd be getting some World Title shots on the house show circuit in January and February. Houston tries a sunset flip but gets punched in the face and it's off to Bass (the evil cowboy). Another sunset flip doesn't work as Houston needs to find something else. A powerslam plants Houston, just as I realize that he looks like someone let the air out of Tito Santana.

Warrior comes in and drops Bass with a right hand and a corner clothesline. Honky Tonk Man and Valentine are knocked away as well as the fans are going nuts. A Rocket Launcher gives Blazer two on Bass and Honky Tonk Man gets dropkicked into the corner. Blazer powerslams Valentine down but Honky Tonk shoves him off the top, setting up a Figure Four to make Blazer give up. Superman has Kryptonite, Martian Manhunter has fire and Blue Blazer has leg submissions.

Beefcake comes in and Jesse actually brings up their partnership. So we're down to Beefcake/Warrior vs. Valentine/Honky Tonk Man/Bass and Beefcake is in trouble. The Shake Rattle and Roll is broken up with a backdrop and a right hand knocks Honky Tonk Man out of the air. There's the atomic drop for the funny sell job but Beefcake STILL won't tag. Seriously dude learn your lesson already.

Beefcake grabs the sleeper but he and Honky Tonk Man fall out to the floor. The sleeper goes on outside and that's a double countout to get us down to 2-1. The double teaming begins in a hurry and Warrior is in trouble in the corner. A double clothesline takes the villains down and

back to back ax handles give Warrior the win at 17:51.

Rating: C. This wasn't great but it was a good choice for the opener. The fans are going to eat up Warrior and Beefcake every time and those were some fine choices for villains to dispatch. There was no way Warrior was going to lose here though and it was nothing more than a showcase for his new title reign. That's hardly a problem as it worked the previous year, albeit with some far, far better talent.

Team Demolition vs. Team Powers of Pain

Demolition/Brain Busters/Bolsheviks/Fabulous Rougeau Brothers/Los Conquistadors

Powers of Pain/Rockers/British Bulldogs/Hart Foundation/Young Stallions

Here's a famous one and to clear up a common misconception: this is NOT the only time Bret and Shawn teamed up as they were together on some house shows in the 90s. All the managers are here too, making this one of the best who's whos in wrestling history. As you might guess, any wrestler being eliminated means his partner is gone as well.

Davey Boy Smith and Conquistador #1 start things off and I'm not going to bother mentioning every tag. With so many people to feature, there's not going to be much more than a few seconds of action for each. Shawn gets taken into the wrong corner, though there are wrestlers almost surrounding the apron, which means we need a variety of camera angles to make sure we can see most of the early action.

Marty dropkicks Arn (who Jesse praises) down so it's off to Tully as I really want to see Bret in there now. Instead it's Jacques coming in and missing a middle rope crossbody, allowing a tag off to Dynamite Kid. Ray Rougeau comes in and it's a good thing Dynamite doesn't break his nose. Bret comes in and a quick small package gets rid of the Rougeaus so we can have a little room.

It's off to Neidhart, who is quickly caught in the wrong corner. An awkward looking clothesline takes Smash down and it's Barbarian coming in for the real showdown. That always awesome big boot takes Smash's head

off and it's back to Bret to hammer away on Ax's ribs. Tully comes in with a top rope shot to the ribs as this should get entertaining in a hurry. Shawn and Ax get the tags and it's time to demolish Michaels, which will never get old. It's off to Nikolai Volkoff for the gorilla press backbreaker (albeit a sloppy one), followed by a great looking spinebuster from Anderson. You can hear the fans react to it as well, which they certainly should.

A Conquistador comes in and gives up a hot tag to Jannetty. The rapid tags continue until it's Davey's turn to take Nikolai's kick to the ribs. Tully misses an elbow drop though and it's off to the Warlord vs. Ax for the big showdown of the match. Warlord gets the better of it and trips the now legal Smash down just as easily. It's already off to Barbarian for a running knee to the ribs as another team needs to be eliminated in short order. Tully comes back in and walks into a gorilla press hot shot, followed by a powerslam from Neidhart for two.

Next up is Dynamite getting stomped down so it's off to Jim Powers to hammer on Zhukov. Boris rolls through a middle rope crossbody though and gets rid of Powers to tie things up. Shawn comes back in to speed things up again, including a middle rope fist drop for a near fall. It's back to Tully who sees Barbarian waiting on him and struts over to Volkoff for the tag. The Russian actually takes over and hands it off to Ax, who hammers Barbarian down without much effort.

It's Shawn back in a few seconds later and a blind tag allows Marty to sunset flip Boris for the pin and an elimination. As has been the custom so far though, Marty gets beaten down just after having some success. It's right back to the Bulldog to face Tully with a hard toss sending Blanchard into the corner. The next tag in a very, very long series of them brings in Neidhart for something like a Demolition Decapitator on Dos. Dynamite with his sweet 70s mustache comes in for a middle rope knee and it's back to Barbarian.

Hang on a second though as Bobby needs to give Tully some instructions before he gets pounded down. The advice seems to be a tag to Smash, who hammers Barbarian down for a neck crank. That goes nowhere either so it's off to Neidhart to suplex Blanchard, followed by a backbreaker from Bret.

They head into the corner with Bret trying a German suplex but Tully raises an arm for the pin and an elimination.

We're down to the Powers of Pain/Rockers/British Bulldogs vs. Demolition/Brain Busters/Conquistadors with Dynamite getting two on Tully off a Tombstone. Shawn comes in and it's a four way brawl between the Brain Busters and the Rockers, drawing a double DQ to really clear the ring out some more. The fans are NOT pleased with that but we're at nearly half an hour into this with four teams left so it's something that had to be done.

Ax cranks on Dynamite's neck as the four eliminated guys fight to the back. Davey comes in and crucifixes Ax for two, only to get sent hard into the corner. It's back to Dynamite for some forearms to Smash's head but, as has been the case all match long, the tag is just allowed with little resistance offered. Davey gorilla presses and powerslams Uno but it's right back to Ax vs. Barbarian with the latter being hammered down. Jesse talks about this being the dream match, which we've heard multiple times now.

Dos comes in and eats a double back elbow for, uh, dos, followed by Dynamite getting the same off a gutwrench suplex. A big legdrop from Warlord gets no cover and both Jesse and Gorilla are all over him for such a stupid mistake. To top that, Dynamite does the same thing for probably the fourth time tonight. The snap suplex to Smash sets up the diving headbutt but Dynamite only hits the mat, giving Smash the pin. That's it for the Bulldogs in the WWF as Dynamite's back was basically held together by gum and paperclips at this point. Throw in a fight with the Rougeau Brothers and there was just no future for them here.

Warlord goes shoulder first into the post and Ax hammers away as Jesse still can't believe that the Conquistadors are still around. Fair enough point actually. Demolition's manager Mr. Fuji gets on the apron to yell at Ax despite the team being in control. That's rather odd and sounds quite a bit like a plot point. A neck crank slows things down again but Warlord shoves Smash to the ropes, which Fuji pulls down to send Smash outside. Ax goes over to check on his partner but Smash is counted out to get us down to two on two.

Fuji and Ax get in an argument with Fuji hitting him with the cane. Smash is up though and slams Fuji down before leaving. The Powers of Pain go to check on Fuji though and we've got the ultra rare double turn. I mean, it didn't really work immediately but it does solve the problem of BRINGING IN THE POWERS OF PAIN AS FACES. It's one thing to have a pair of power brawlers as faces when they have the Legion of Doom's charisma but that's certainly not the case here. So the Conquistadors hammer on Warlord until Fuji trips Dos up, allowing Barbarian to drop a headbutt and FINALLY wrap this up at 42:24.

Rating: A-. The amazing roster is what people remember the most here and I can't say I blame them. The double turn is cool and all but sweet goodness it's hard to remember that when you see all the talent in this thing. You might never see a better collection of talent (and the Young Stallions) in a single match. The problem here though is having too many people around, making it pretty difficult to have anyone stand out. It's a very good match though and easily the highlight of the night.

Demolition comes back in to brawl with the Powers of Pain.

Bad News Brown doesn't care about Survivor Series but thinks he should be the WWF World Champion. He's beaten everyone who has been put against him, including winning the Wrestlemania battle royal. It's kind of odd to see them reference something from that long ago at this point and I rather like it. Now I'd like to get away from Brown as those big eyes are still intimidating.

Gorilla and Jesse discuss Brown as the intermission continues.

Fuji is with the Powers of Pain and thinks Demolition was getting too overconfident so it's time for a new team. Barbarian actually talks, which is certainly a rarity in this company. Gene doesn't think Fuji can be trusted, and I for one believe Mean Gene Okerlund.

Gorilla and Jesse don't have much on that one, as it pretty much speaks for itself.

We look at the remaining two matches in those always awesome squares. The sobering/surprising part: of the heels in the next match, Harley Race,

the veteran at this point, is the only one still alive. Even the managers are both gone.

Team Andre is ready for their match with Bobby Heenan saying everyone is going to be afraid of Andre. For reasons that I don't want to fathom, Dino Bravo is co-captain and promises to put some shame in Jim Duggan. Rick Rude, Mr. Perfect and Andre all say they'll win. Harley Race doesn't get to say anything. How rude indeed.

Team Mega Powers is united and ready to fight. Koko B. Ware, Hercules and Hillbilly Jim all come off as filler and it's hard to fathom that they're in a pay per view main event. Well maybe not Hercules.

Team Jake Roberts vs. Team Andre the Giant

Jake Roberts, Jim Duggan, Ken Patera, Scott Casey, Tito Santana

Andre the Giant, Dino Bravo, Harley Race, Rick Rude, Mr. Perfect

Patera is a strongman, Casey is a jobber to the stars (He's replacing B. Brian Blair, who was replacing Junkyard Dog. He also went on to train Booker T.) and the main feuds here are Jake vs. Andre and Duggan vs. Bravo. In an odd thing to hear, Perfect is introduced as Mr. Perfect Curt Hennig. Rude and Patera start things off with Ken shoving him away as Gorilla talks about Patera retiring him.

Bravo comes in for a really bad power battle. Thankfully it doesn't last long, though Jesse does manage to get in his talk about Bravo's bench pressing abilities. It's off to the awesome matchup of Jake vs. Perfect (who I really hope had a 20+ minute match at some point) with Roberts getting the better of it and handing it off to Tito (who also should have gone 20+ with Perfect). Bravo comes back in and gets his arm cranked on for a bit. Casey hits an ax handle but walks into an atomic drop.

It's off to Race for a belly to belly before handing it off to Rude. A headbutt staggers Perfect and it's off to Patera for an elbow to the face. Duggan comes in to a heck of a reaction and clotheslines the heck out of Perfect. A right hand in the corner staggers him again but Andre reaches over the ropes and grabs Duggan's head to take over. Gorilla

turns this into an ad for the Royal Rumble in a pivot that would have made Vince proud.

Tito hits something like the flying forearm for two on Rude but Duggan misses an elbow drop. A double collision puts Rude and Duggan down and it's back to Patera. Since Ken isn't all that good though, he charges into a boot in the corner and the Rude Awakening makes it 5-4. Casey charges in and gets dropkicked down by Race, followed by Bravo's side slam for the pin. Duggan comes in swinging away as his team is suddenly in BIG trouble. Unfortunately he winds up in the wrong corner as well (he never was all that bright) and the one sided beating continues.

Duggan finally gets away for a clothesline and it's off to Race vs. Santana (sweet goodness the teases of awesome matches in this one are almost too much to take). That one doesn't last too long though as Bravo comes back in and gets sunset flipped for two more. Race comes in again and grabs the piledriver for two (that probably should have been a finisher), only to walk into Tito's flying forearm for the pin.

Santana's reward is Andre, who chops him down with ease and hammers away like King Kong swatting at a fly. For some reason Tito tries a sunset flip and Andre sits/falls on him for the elimination. We're down to Andre/Perfect/Rude/Bravo vs. Roberts/Duggan, with the latter knocking Andre into the ropes. Jake comes in and chokes away, only to have Rude tag himself in and knock Jake into the corner.

We hit the hip swivel and it's off to Perfect, who I bet can do a mean swivel of his own. Jake is in trouble but manages to clothesline Bravo (who would be the weak link of the team), only to have Rude clothesline him from the apron. One heck of a right hand puts Roberts down, allowing Dino to grab a piledriver of his own. That's only good for two as well, allowing Duggan to come in off another hot tag. The three point clothesline is loaded up but Bravo's manager Frenchy Martin (a worthless and rather bulbous excuse for a manager if there ever was one) pulls him to the floor.

Duggan has had enough and brings in the 2x4 to blast Bravo in the ribs, making it 4-1. Roberts gets to deal with Perfect first and knees him

away, meaning it's time for more Bravo. For some reason Jake tries a test of strength and is quickly taken down. The threat of a DDT is blocked with a back body drop and Bravo brings Rude in again.

Rick slowly hammers Jake down as Jesse suggests that Jake's wife Cheryl will leave Jake for Rude if Jake loses. A quickly broken bearhug has Jake in trouble but he pulls Rude's tights down. It's enough of a distraction for a DDT to get rid of Rude but it's Andre time. The choking ensues and Andre is quickly disqualified but Jake is more or less dead, giving Perfect the easy pin at 30:02.

Rating: C. This was another long match but it told a good story. The villains were COMPLETELY dominant here and Duggan and Roberts were the only ones who could do anything. It makes Jake and Duggan look good, but they were overmatched by the whole team. It keeps the feuds ready for next time when the heroes can fight back. It's a smart story and things are set up well for the future. The match wasn't the worst and it's nice to have the whole version as the Coliseum Video version cut this down to EIGHT MINUTES.

Team Twin Towers is ready to destroy the Mega Powers. You're not going to do that chums. For some reason the camera goes into an EXTREME closeup on Boss Man when he's talking about crushing Hogan. That was a heck of a disturbing visual.

Team Mega Powers vs. Team Twin Towers

Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage, Koko B. Ware, Hillbilly Jim, Hercules

Big Boss Man, Akeem, Ted DiBiase, King Haku, Ted Rooster

Akeem is freshly off his transformation from the One Man Gang. Also, sweet goodness that's quite the fall for DiBiase, who was helping to get the title off Hogan just ten months earlier. Of note here: Hogan gets his own entrance while the rest of the team comes out on their own. What a selfish hero. Hercules wants to start with DiBiase (who recently purchased Hercules and called him a slave) but it's Savage starting for the team instead. Somehow we don't get a reference to Wrestlemania and it's off to Hercules after a clothesline from Savage.

Rooster comes in and stops Koko in the corner as I wonder how we got two bird brains in the main event. It's already back to Hercules to slug it out with Haku but he hands it off to Hogan in short order. A double big boot with Hillbilly helping Hulk drops Haku but it's quickly back to the Rooster. My goodness they're tagging fast tonight. The Rooster tries to ram Koko's head into the corner and the powers of racial stereotypes takes over. A missile dropkick puts Rooster down and Savage drops the elbow for the first elimination.

The good guys clear the ring and we take a brief break as Heenan apologizes for his man losing so quickly. Haku comes in and pokes Hogan in the eye and a heck of a dropkick puts him down. Hercules comes in, gets slammed, and it's right back to Hillbilly. Thanks for coming in Herc. Akeem splashes Jim in the corner a few times and the running splash ties things up. Koko comes back in and throws a few right hands before Hogan comes back in instead. There really is no hiding the fact that this is ALL about Hogan and Savage (as it should be of course).

Koko and Hercules take turns hammering on Akeem until Koko misses a charge in the corner. The Boss Man Slam gets rid of Ware and it's 4-3. Boss Man turns around and gets Hogan, drawing a heck of a reaction from the crowd. Right hands set up a slam on the Boss Man but Hogan charges into a spinebuster (still weird for that to not have an official name). The running crotch attack has Hogan in more trouble and it's off to DiBiase for a clothesline. That's already enough for the Hulk Up and an atomic drop but Hogan is nice enough to hand it off to Hercules.

The beating is on (Jesse: "A slave doing this to his master!") and some clotheslines have DiBiase in trouble until Virgil trips him up. DiBiase grabs a rollup to get rid of Hercules but Savage is smart enough to run in and grab a rollup of his own to eliminate DiBiase. That leaves the Twin Towers/Haku vs. the Mega Powers and it should be a matter of time now. Savage leg dives Haku and brings in Hogan, who eats a superkick to put Hulk in trouble. The Towers take turns beating Hulk down and we hit the nerve hold from Haku.

For some reason Boss Man tries a top rope splash and, of course, misses completely. The hot tag brings in Savage but Slick makes a quick trip

(WAY too common of an idea on this show). Slick grabs Miss Elizabeth and of course you know this means war. It's Hogan making the save but Boss Man cuffs him to the ropes, which takes too long, earning himself a countout. Boss Man beats the heck out of Hogan with the nightstick before doing the same thing to Savage.

That's enough to DQ Akeem and unfortunately we don't get the over the top Jesse reaction. Haku misses an elbow on Savage and of course Slick taunts the cuffed Hogan with the key. A missed superkick takes Slick down and Elizabeth steals the key, freeing Hogan as Savage is being mauled. Haku's top rope splash gets two and another superkick puts Savage in the corner for the tag. The big boot and legdrop wrap things up at 29:08.

Rating: C+. This really was just about the last five minutes and maybe Hercules vs. DiBiase to a much lesser degree. At this point though, you need as much hype towards Hogan vs. Savage as you can have and five months in advance is more than acceptable. It's not a great match or even close to one but it was entertaining and accomplished the primary goal. You can't ask for much more than that.

Hogan poses and hugs Elizabeth without even checking on Savage. Randy poses as well but clearly isn't cool with all this. I love how Hogan was made the face in this whole thing. Today he would be the top heel in about five minutes but there was no way that was working in 1988.

Overall Rating: B. While not as good as the first edition, this show more than holds its own and has a classic (albeit a VERY long one) to bolster some not great action otherwise. There's a story/point to every match and they did a good job of further establishing the concept. It was hardly a played out idea at this point and the matches were given ample time (too much in some cases) to flesh out the pretty new match. It's so weird to see this as more of a stepping stone to Wrestlemania, which was the be all and end all even back then. Good show this year but not as good as the first edition.

Ratings Comparison

Team Ultimate Warrior vs. Team Honky Tonk Man

Original: D

2012 Redo: C

2017 Redo: C

Team Powers of Pain vs. Team Demolition

Original: A

2012 Redo: A

2017 Redo: A-

Team Andre the Giant vs. Team Jim Duggan

Original: F

2012 Redo: C-

2017 Redo: C

Team Mega Powers vs. Team Twin Towers

Original: D+

2012 Redo: C+

2017 Redo: C+

Overall Rating

Original: D+

2012 Redo: B

2017 Redo: B

I must have been in a really, really bad mood the first time I watched this as only the second match is in the same ballpark. Everything else is pretty much the same and I think we have my definitive take on this show.

Here's the original if you're interested:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2011/11/07/history-of-surivor-series-count-up-1988-more-clips-than-my-last-haircut/>

And the 2012 Redo:

<http://kbwrestlingreviews.com/2015/10/28/survivor-series-count-up-1988-vi-va-los-conquistadores/>

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